

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 25, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy:

Thank you for your continued leadership in supporting State Department programs that are essential to our national security, diplomacy, and humanitarian efforts. We write to request that you continue to show support for international tuberculosis (TB) elimination by providing robust funding for bilateral TB control in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs (SFOP) Appropriations bill.

TB is a curable, airborne disease that kills more people worldwide than any other infectious disease. An estimated 10 million people fell ill due to TB in 2017, resulting in 1.6 million deaths that year. Pregnant women and children are especially vulnerable to TB, and schools can serve as TB transmission hotspots, with 1 million children becoming ill with TB in 2017. Failure to invest in TB control also threatens the substantial gains we have made in the fight against HIV/AIDS with 300,000 people with HIV/AIDS dying from tuberculosis in 2017.

Drug-resistant TB is a growing threat as most drug-resistant cases are now caused by direct person-to-person transmission instead of inappropriate treatment, making it considerably easier for it to spread to new geographic areas. Rapid diagnostics and new medications for multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) are enabling faster progress against the disease. But these new technologies are still underutilized, and U.S. assistance is vital to speeding adoption of new approaches.

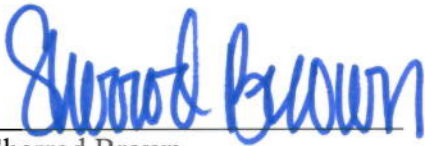
Momentum is building to end TB, with growing political will and community engagement. At last year's United Nations High Level Meeting on TB, one-hundred and twenty countries agreed to ambitious new detection, treatment and prevention targets. We urge you to commit to funding levels that will ensure the U.S. can seize this momentum and lead the world in ending TB as a global security threat. With robust funding, USAID can help each country reach its prevention and treatment goals and ensure continued development and implementation of new, more effective treatments. As part of the Committee's directives, we also urge you to encourage USAID to prioritize U.S. investment in targeted and comprehensive strategies that involve SEARCH-TREAT-PREVENT protocol. TB is easily spread from person to person, so is it vital that funding is ensured to programs that proactively address TB transmission within communities using the latest evidence-based tools.

In addition, the United States' contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (the Global Fund) is a crucial way to leverage more resources to combat TB and MDR-TB. Investments from USAID and the Global Fund are interdependent, with USAID providing crucial technical assistance to Global Fund grants. To date, the Global Fund partnership has tested and treated 17.4 million people for TB and provides more than 65 percent of financing for TB programs worldwide. As you know, the U.S. pledged up to \$4.3 billion over the last three years for the Global Fund's 5th Replenishment. We request that the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund in FY20 exceed FY19 in order to continue the momentum to end TB.

The global fight against TB has scored impressive successes – an estimated 54 million lives have been saved from 2000-2017, showing an enormous return on investment. USAID's TB program centers on building the capacity to end TB. Robust funding in FY20 would build on the success of the previous Administration's 2015 National Action Plan to Combat MDR-TB, and would help stem the spread of this killer disease both domestically and globally.

We acknowledge the difficulty you face in determining the best allocation of precious foreign assistance dollars. We thank you for your consistent support of USAID's TB control program and the Global Fund, and urge you to make combating TB a top priority for your FY20 appropriations bill.

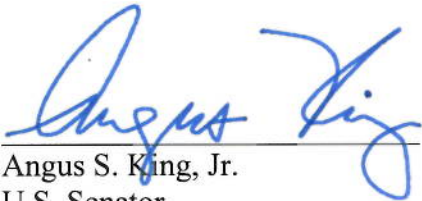
Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator



Todd Young
U.S. Senator



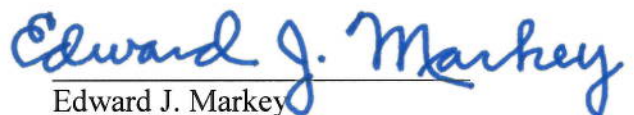
Angus S. King, Jr.
U.S. Senator



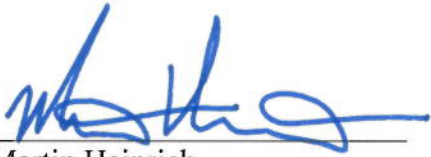
Dan Sullivan
U.S. Senator



Tammy Duckworth
U.S. Senator



Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator



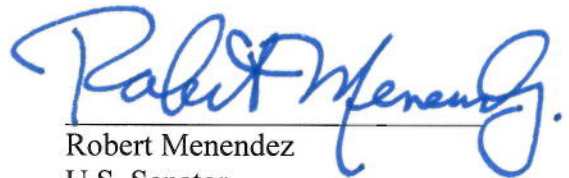
Martin Heinrich
U.S. Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senator



Richard J. Durbin
U.S. Senator



Robert Menendez
U.S. Senator



Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senator



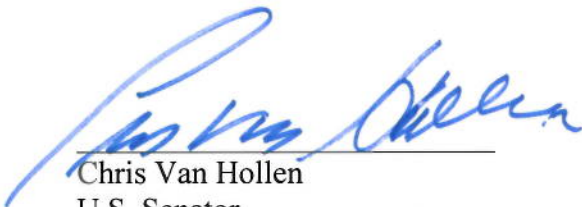
Mazie K. Hirono
U.S. Senator



Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senator



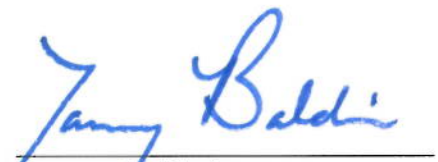
Gary C. Peters
U.S. Senator



Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator



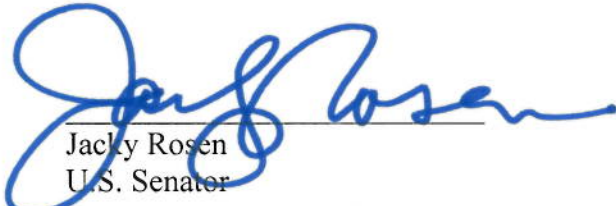
Elizabeth Warren
U.S. Senator



Tammy Baldwin
U.S. Senator



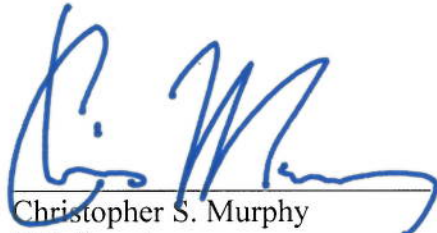
Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senator



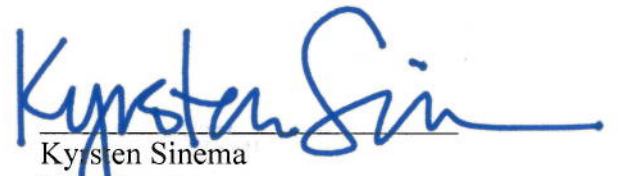
Jacky Rosen
U.S. Senator



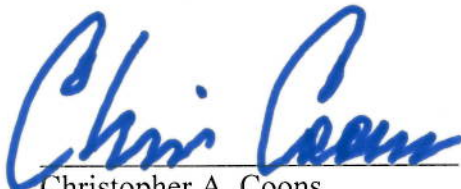
Debbie Stabenow
U.S. Senator



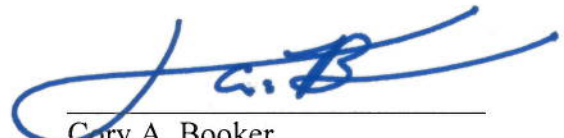
Christopher S. Murphy
U.S. Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
U.S. Senator



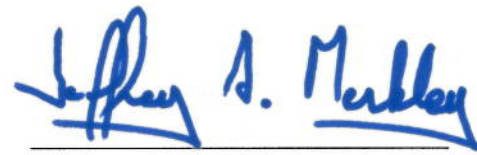
Christopher A. Coons
U.S. Senator




Cory A. Booker
U.S. Senator



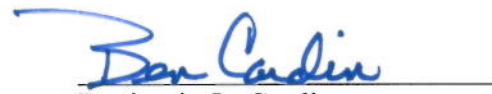
Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
U.S. Senator



Ron Wyden
U.S. Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator



Brian Schatz
U.S. Senator